# HARAMBEE FLAME

a publication of the harambee afrikan cultural organization

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## H.A.C.O. BANQUET HELD

On Sunday evening, April 29th., we held our annual banquet at the usual place--the Nebraska State Prison in Lincoln. The banquet was ushered in by a reading of(and English translation) an African tribal prayer by our guest speaker, Hafeni Hatutale. The Harambee Afrikan Cultural Organization creed was recited by the Chairman. The program was m.c.'d by Shakur.

Special recognition was given to H.A.C.O. members: Terry Kern, Alan Hardin, Lee McNichols, Michael Sturgeon, and Wopashitwe Mondo Eyen we Langa. Outside persons receiving special ecognition were Buddy Hogan, Alonzo Smith, and Sharron Jones(chosen for her work in helping to organize H.A.C.O.'s fund-raising project - a fashion show - for the Sickle Cell Anemia Foundation).

In his address to the gathering, Hafeni Hatutale, spoke of the importance of cultural identity, the commonality of origin of both African-born and American-born Africans, and urged us to respect African people wherever we are to be found and be aware of and concerned about the conditions of African people around the world. Hafeni's address was followed by supportive remarks on the parts of Shakur and the H.A.C.O. Chairman.

Harry Eure, who is chairman of the Afro-Academy of Dramatic Arts in Omaha, recited poetry. And following a meal of both native African and "soul" dishes prepared by the Southeast Community College Culinary Arts School, the Sisters and Brothers listened and danced to a live musical performance by "Elements of Time," a prison band organized by Darwin Robinson, under the direction of Chuck Miller.

The folks seemed to enjoy the hell out of themselves. More importantly, we hope our banquet was both an educational and inspirational experience for those who attended.

## UNCLE ANDY, AUNT CORETTA

In a recent address given at a Jesse Jackson rally at Horace Mann Jr. High School, State Senator Ernie Chambers made reference to Andrew Young as an Uncle Tom and spoke similarly of Coretta Scott-King and other Africans in the U.S. whom have endorsed Walter Mondale for the Presidency. No doubt, in so doing, Brother Chambers bruised some of his listeners' sensibilities. Some of us view certain of our "leaders" and "spokespersons" as veritable "sacred cows" whose characters/names should not be sullied.

Bruised sensibilities notwithstanding, Ernie's comments about Young, Coretta Scott-King, et al are supported by the tremendous weight of the history of this nation's political system's dealings with us and the current political situation. Throughout the history of their existence, the Democratic and Republican parties have treated us as if we were some variety of unwanted step-child. We owe neither party blind loyalty.

Though the point(of dubious value) can be made, and has been, that Reagan must be defeated at any cost, Andrew Young, Wilson Goode, Coretta Scott-King, and other Afri-

(Continued on p. 4)

# A READER COMMENTS ON BLACK-WHITE RELATIONSHIPS

(In the Fall of 1982, the Harambee Afrikan Cultural Organization conducted a program on the issue of relationships between American-born African men and women. Sisters Alva Barnett, Angela Perry, and Kayline Ekeh served as panelists for that program. In the September '82 edition of the FLAME, there was coverage of the program. Apparently, Brother Stelly just recently saw a copy of the September '82 edition of our newsletter. Portions of his remarks follow.)

My first impression deals with the professed "lack of respect that Brothers have for Sisters" and the black female's alleged politeness in allowing us to maintain a "sense of dignity." While David is correct in terms of the appearance of our relationships, I believe that the essential qualities are not being put out front.

The fact of the matter is this: if women are allowing us to hold on to beliefs in male superiority or dominance, this is hardly a "polite tactic" but rather, falls in line with the same inadequacies found in the white male/female relationship. Granted, many men need their egos stroked by women who accept their "supremacy," but for us to continue this pattern merely paves the way for our own undermining and eventual destruction.

What worked in the past might not be applicable in terms of future survival. In light of this, those "polite" sisters who are doing us these "favors" by accepting our "domination" would do well to reverse this trend immediately. For it is what they do in conjunction with us that shows their power and potential of resistance should they have to confront the oppressor alone. And if all we have to offer them is a black version of Charlie's sexist ideology, then all is lost. Black women must take the initiative to do what is necessary, and this includes doing more than talking about the "shortage of black men." If there is a shortage, then defense and development should be one of her priorities. This is not meant to paint a negative picture of our struggle, merely a realistic one.

In addition, Bro. Rice talks of the pressure put on black men to be breadwinners and further, that we become frustrated because of our pursuit of materialism. Again, David is correct but the key question is: where does this pressure come from? David says it is the Madison Ave./Wall St. standard. But I say that we put the pressure on ourselves by submitting to someone else's definition of what is relevant and irrelevant.

Wall Street might set the standards, but that does not mean that we must strive for them. Black women and their men have "gone without" for so long, our immediate desire(when economically able) is to go out and get ourselves into as much debt as possible. In my book, thai is an example of "displacement of values," and while Wall Street might be indirectly a part of the cause, our own inability or unwillingness to define ourselves(and therefore our needs and wants) should also be carefully analyzed. We might not like what we find.

Another point was the claim that black men are seven times more likely to marry white women than are black women (to marry white men), but that the percentage of black women marrying white men has doubled in the decade from 1970 to 1980. More fundamental to these easily assembled facts is "interracial dating." We are concerned, it seems, not so much about race-mixture, but about the permanence of it. The key is that interracial dating is the basis for interracial marriage because it is the courtship process that leads to marriage.

In light of this fact, we have to reas-

ses our priorities and begin to critically analyze interracial dating and its sub-categories, the intentions of the white woman as well as the value system of the balck man. And finally, if sisters are starting to date and marry white men more, then as black men, we deserve it. We cannot expect to chase white women with reckless abandon and expect our women - already deprived because of our lack of numbers and power - to sit around singing, "what did I do to be so black and so blue."

Finally, the eloquent editor writes, "...emphasis is being placed on the responsibility of Brothers because, owing to the facts that only women get pregnant and that men are generally physically stronger than women, Sisters are more vulnerable to real or readily identifiable victimization than Brothers are."

Perhaps. Perhaps not. What we should realize is that there are differences in the methods of operation and ploys used to pimp and placate our men and women. But the fact is that the same devil controls both mechanisms. History is replete with examples of men being moved on and murdered first, castrated, lynched and maimed to intimidate her(the black woman) by emphasizing our powerlessness. If this is the case, she is in a position where she can reassess her role and become more active in the struggle as "the man" foolishly contines murdering and harassing black men.

We then, can be the decoy, and I have enough confidence in the black woman's strength to trust her on the front lines. Whether she belongs there or not is insignificant at this point. We have to stop worrying about what is "good" or "bad" and begin addressing what is necessary. We need a collective effort and our women have the kind of energy, strength and fortitude to assist us in our struggle for liberation.

--Matthew Stelly

## WHAT'S IN A NAME?

Caucasian people in this country go about their business with names like O'Riley, Smith, Witowski, and so forth and these names make sense to us because they reflect the European heritage of these people. Are we, African people in the U.S., of European heritage? Hardly. While many or most of us may have at least one Caucasian somewhere in our lineage, our heritage is primarily African. For this reason, our European names fit us poorly.

What is in a name? A name functions as a reminder of one's identity and, in the case of naming processes followed by most tribal/traditional people, a name is a reminder of what is expected of a person. For example, "Muhoja" is a Swahili name which means "Bringer of peace." A person with such a name is constantly reminded of her("Muhoja" is a female name.) duty to carry herself in such a manner so as to bring peace to those with whom she comes into contact.

Unlike Native Americans, who know their tribal origins(Sioux, Crow, Navajo, etc.), We Africans whose foreparents were brought to America as slaves generally have no idea whatsoever of either what geographical area of Africa we come from or what our tribal origins are. When we arrive at the point of realizing how silly it is for us to have European names and decide to pick African names for ourselves, we find ourselves to be confronted with the fact that there are a great number of African tribal languages and a far greater number of dialects. In hopes that it might be of some help to you in deciding how you will go about choosing an African name, I give information here on the name I have chosen.

| Name | Tribe | Country | Meaning |
|---|---|---|---|
| Wopashitwe | Kwanyama | Namibia | Wild(natural) |
| Mondo | Gikuyu | Kenya | Man |
| Eyen | Ibibio | Nigeria | Child |
| we Langa | Hausa | Azania | of the Sun |

--Editor/Wopashitwe Mondo Eyen we Langa

## FROM OTHER SOURCES

U.S. FOREIGN POLICY: AFRICA--"Although U.S. figures show a slight increase in aid to Africa for the next fiscal year, the region will in fact receive less aid. Of the $1-billion package, $211 million is earmarked for military assistance to strategic allies to stem what Reagan officials term 'Libyan subversion' and Soviet attempts to gain power in the area. The $90 million that the Reagan administration has planned for emergency food aid has been termed inadequate by some U.S. legislators. The U.S. is reducing its contributions to established development banks but awarding $75 million to African countries willing to follow free-market agricultural policies--part of a $500-million, five-year 'economic policy initiative' that has been criticized as a U.S. bid to usurp the development banks' traditional role. African leaders call Reagan's proposals counterproductive."

--p. 70, May issue of
WORLD PRESS REVIEW

CONGRESSIONAL BLACK CAUCUS--"...Proposals, such as the Congressional Black Caucus's alternative budget, that challenged right-wing priorities, as well as gaping budget shortfalls, have already met swift defeat in the House.

"...(In mid-March)The Republicans said their package of tax increases, spending cuts and savings on interest would amount to $150 billion over three years, while the House Democrats' version, approved by the House April 5, is expected by them to cut the deficit by $182 billion over the same period. The Senate Democrats said they were out to narrow the gap by $200 million. The Black Caucus alternative, embodying compassion as well as fiscal responsibility, would have resulted in a $323 billion cut.

"...Predictably, the Republicans are the most reluctant to cut the enormous military budgets. For fiscal 1985(beginning Oct. 1, 1984), the Rose Garden proposals pare the increase in appropriations to about 7%, down from the 13% incorporated in Reagan's original budget, and they lop off only $41 billion from the 1985-87 total planned originally.

"...The House-approved Democratic budget resolution cuts more deeply into the arms spending increase, ...only half as much as Reagan's latest proposal.

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## UNCLE ANDY, AUNT CORETTA

can folks who have endorsed Mondale over Jackson cannot justify this rejection of a qualified African candidate with the defeat-Reagan-at-any-cost argument. Why? Aside from the questionable validity and wisdom of such an alleged "political strategy," the simple fact is that we are not in the general election. We are in the season of Democratic primaries. It is Democrat against Democrat, Jackson against two Caucasian politicians whose rhetoric barely pays our concerns even lip service.

Since we are not in a situation, at this juncture, wherein support of Jesse Jackson puts anyone in the position of having to choose between Jackson's so-called "symbolic" candidacy and the defeat of Ronald Reagan, the endorsement of either Mondale or Hart by an African suggests one of two(or both) things about such a person. Either he or she is simply and deeply stuck in the mire of that slave mentality whereby one cannot do anything without the white man; or he or she is acting out of sheer opportunism, hoping for or expecting some favor at the political "harvest time."

--Editor

# PoeTRy

## LIFE

grand as you are
with jazz and cigaretts
with dark days of rain
and the wind-blown broken doors
of love
hey i giggle on the champagne of you
with the children in the street
play
pass the ball good life
so i can play my sax
blow my horn
to the tune of you.

## ERASING

when my patience is knocked across the page
cuz the bed got bounced by small feet
when i want quiet but he won't listen to me
i end up singing a sorry song
rocking him to sleep, hip
to why mama's fist used to scream
on top of me
i promise next time to tie the shoe
wipe the shit
guess the riddle and
not love like i was
but like i can.

T.L. Hopkins

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To submit your poems, send to:

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CONGRESSIONAL BLACK CAUCUS (from THE GUARDIAN, May 2)

"...The Congressional Black Caucus, on the other hand, proposed that arms outlays remain virtually unchanged over the three years, resulting in reductions five times greater than Reagan's.

"...On April 12, it(the House) passed a deficit-reduction measure snipping $10 billion from already skimpy entitlements.

"...It(Black Caucus) would boost AFDC, for instance, by $3 billion in fiscal 1985 and food stamps by $5 billion; provide an extra $5 billion for elementary and sec. educ.."